

Alternatives to Classroom Training

The Benefits of Classroom Training

Interaction is the critical component of classroom training. A lesson structure that involves exercises, questions and answers with an expert instructor, group work with other participants, development of a training end-game plan to link the training to how it will be used in the workplace, and a follow-up assessment in three or six months to determine what was actually applied on the job and in your career plan are all benefits from well run classroom training. At times, however, you can derive excellent benefits from alternate training (AT).

On-Line Learning

The Department has an exceptional on-line program:

<https://olc2.energy.gov/elms/learner/login.jsp> .

You can go right to the catalog and check out some of the offerings without even getting a password:

https://olc2.energy.gov/customcontent/doecode/learner/doe_course_catalog.htm

Of course, you should get and remember your password because you will be using the OLC² to take mandatory training like safety, ethics, and cyber security training. The Department also has some basic guides to courses on the OLC² like a guide to classes covering the Department's [universal competencies](#) and [management competencies](#).

On-line academic classes are also available from various public and private colleges and universities.

Read a Book and Report on the Applications of the Book

An individual or a group working together as peer learning team can assemble information from a variety of sources quickly and efficiently to prepare themselves or an office for a new assignment or to improve an old one. Make assignments, assemble materials, discover the best points through analysis and group discussions, and then prepare a verbal and a more comprehensive written report for your boss or your office as a whole. The internet and interviewing experts can greatly expand the scope and reliability of this group action training approach. The process can become an action training project if you are asked to prepare a project plan and implement your recommendations.

Mentoring and Coaching

The Department has a mentoring program ([POCs](#)) or you can take advantage of our [Training Consulting Services](#) to design a program for yourself. Coaching usually involves direct, hands on assistance to learn how to accomplish a specific task or activity successfully and there is usually a test with specific, measureable outcomes whether formal or informal. Mentoring involves relationship building in the context of competencies useful on the job and in your career plan. Both of these relationships should be confidential and be designed to help you move forward instead of creating obstacles.

Action Assignments

If you want to develop your competency profile through action training assignments, you should look for an activity or task that involves the following:

1. A measureable result so you know if you succeeded or failed.
2. Responsibility for getting those results for a new boss.
3. Interaction with new people and as many as possible.
4. Not-in-your control or independent variables to build influencing and negotiating and team leadership skills.
5. Much more variety than your current job.
6. A strategic objective of your organization and senior management visibility.
7. An intellectual challenge to make you stretch and hard work to force you to set priorities and maintain a balance at work and at home.

Even if the assignment or project does not have all these components at the beginning, you can restructure the effort to include most of them.

Most action assignments involve starting or installing something new, fixing and/or expanding an existing process, working directly to resolve customer problems, or running a non-standard activity like the company picnic, a charity campaign, or finding coaches for the local junior hockey league. All these types of activities can involve totally new challenges, new people, and organization and leadership skills. If you want to build your flexibility, resilience, and interpersonal skills, try developing and teaching a class directly tied to a strategic objective of your organization.

Summary

Experiential learning can develop your competency profile, help you meet people to advance your career, help you understand more about what your strengths are, and contribute to your organization. Make them a challenge.